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ABSTRACT

Working Connections is a program resulting from a partnership between the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Microsoft Corporation. The program was designed to help increase the number of skilled information technology (IT) workers by providing focused training in IT careers. Since 1998, AACC and Microsoft have awarded cash grants, software, and technical assistance to 63 community colleges to help them create and enhance their IT training programs. Working Connections has four primary objectives: (1) business/industry outreach--to create strong relationships with local businesses and industry and tailor programs to meet their needs; (2) IT curriculum development--to develop or strengthen IT program content through certificates and associate degree programs; (3) workforce development--to deliver quality IT education and training, with a special focus on attracting people from disadvantaged populations; and (4) faculty/staff development--to increase community college faculty and staff expertise in IT. Proposed plans of the new recipients are highlighted. Recipients include: Bristol Community College (Massachusetts), Fashion Institute of Technology (New York), Ilisagvik College (Alaska), Kentucky Community and Technical College System, St. Petersburg Junior College (Florida), San Diego City College (California), Southwest Virginia Community College, and Southwestern Oregon Community College. Past recipients are also listed, with contact information for each institution. (CJW)

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PROJECT BRIEF

# Working Connections: Class of 2002

Kristin Becker and Lynn Barnett

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Microsoft Corporation have partnered to create a $10 million grant initiative to help community colleges develop and enhance information technology (IT) training programs that respond to 21st century needs. These training programs feature local business/industry partnerships, IT curriculum development, workforce development for disadvantaged populations, and faculty/staff development. Over a five-year period, 1998 to 2002, AACC and Microsoft have awarded cash grants, plus software and technical assistance, to 63 community colleges.

*Working Connections* was designed to help increase the number of skilled IT workers needed to meet the demands of the growing and diverse technological industries. *Working Connections* addresses this shortage by providing focused training in IT careers and by bringing people into IT training programs. *Working Connections Colleges* are creating model IT programs designed with a career ladder approach, preparing students for entry-level jobs, and offering advanced training components for experienced workers. Students enrolled in these programs gain workplace experience and receive student support services. To ensure that these programs match the needs of college communities, *Working Connections Colleges* actively work with local businesses and community organizations.

*Working Connections* has four primary objectives:

- Business/industry outreach
  Create strong relationships with local business and industry, identifying their IT needs and tailoring programs to meet those needs.
- IT curriculum development
  Develop or strengthen IT program content through (a) IT certificate and/or associate degree programs and (b) other certificate/associate degree programs with significant IT components.
- Workforce development
  Deliver quality IT education and training, with a special focus on attracting and graduating people from disadvantaged populations.
- Faculty/staff development
  Increase community college faculty and staff expertise in IT.

**WORKING CONNECTIONS CLASS OF 2002**

Bristol Community College, Fall River, MA
Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, NY
Ilisagvik College, Barrow, AK
Kentucky Community and Technical College System, Lexington, KY
St. Petersburg Junior College, St. Petersburg, FL
San Diego City College, San Diego, CA
Southwest Virginia Community College, Richlands, VA
Southwestern Oregon Community College, Coos Bay, OR

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# Bristol Community College

## Bristol Information Technology School, BITS

**www.bristol.mass.edu/division_3/BITS.htm**

Bristol Community College's new information technology (IT) career programs will help disadvantaged students bridge the digital divide in Southeastern New England. *Working Connections* supports the Bristol Information Technology School (BITS), which will recruit and educate 75 low-income disadvantaged students over three years and create three IT certificate programs. BITS takes a holistic approach, including remedial studies, mentoring with business partners in the community, and a summer immersion program for students. BITS strengthens academic skills while providing the support needed when students juggle work and family commitments. An unusual element of the grant is the purchase of desktop computers for BITS students to use at home for both homework and online coursework. The college requires students who complete the one-year program to take certification exams in their chosen areas of study. Upon completion of their certification program, BITS graduates have the option of pursuing an associate in science degree in computer information systems at the community college, transferring to a four-year college, or joining the labor force.

### Program Highlights

- Service to low-income Hispanics, Cape Verdeans, Southeast Asians, African Americans, and single parents
- National certifications: A+, Novell Administration, Windows NT/2000 Administration
- Three-month summer immersion program for students, focusing on career interests assessment, academic assessment, job shadowing, team development, work eth[illegible] and introduction to business, computer in[illegible]ion systems, and operating systems
- Computers for home use, with the option for students to purchase the computers for $200 at the end of the program
- Online tutorials to reinforce classroom presentations
- Student listserv and interactive chat rooms
- IT forums for small business, and faculty information exchange on IT topics and needs
- Recruitment of minorities and women to serve as instructors and guest lecturers

- Computer Information Systems
- Computer Support
- Network Administration
- Customer Service Skills
- Computer Technician
- Computer Help Desk

### Partners

Bridgewater Credit Union
Bristol Tech Prep Consortium
Fall River Area Chamber of Commerce
Fall River Division of Employment and Training
Fall River Five Cents Savings Bank
First Federal Savings Bank of America
Greater Fall River Regional Employment Board
Meyer, Regan & Wilner, CPA's
Taunton Public Schools
Texas Instruments
The Feitelberg Insurance Company
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

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Enrollment: 6,060

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# Fashion Institute of Technology

## E-Commerce Working Connections Program

The Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) serves marketing, merchandising, fashion and design industries that are being transformed by the exponential growth of the Internet. FIT's *Working Connections* program will help these industries by training individuals to compete in the new digital age. Students gain a sophisticated grasp of e-commerce solutions in these fields. FIT has created the Center for e-Commerce, which will build certificate programs in small business strategies, e-commerce design, and merchandising and marketing online. The college will serve as an e-commerce industry "solution center" for innovative Internet strategies. Its remarkable array of partnerships includes large retailers, manufacturers, global consultants, publishers, e-commerce metrics aggregators, and advanced technology companies. All of these partners provide e-business curriculum direction for FIT's degree and certificate programs.

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### Program Highlights

- Diverse student body: 82% female, 13.5% foreign-born, and 48.6% minority
- E-commerce center for fashion, marketing, retail and design industries, which will house certificate programs, develop credit courses, provide faculty development, and evolve into an e-commerce think tank for the retail and design industries
- Three certificate programs: small business e-strategies, merchandising and marketing online, e-commerce design
- Major collaboration between two college academic divisions: Business and Technology, and Art and Design
- Electronic clearinghouse where the business community can access student resumes and portfolios
- Continuing education students in four fields: marketing and merchandizing careers in retail; advertising and computer design; planning for retail, design, or manufacturing outlets; small business owners
- Development Training Center to incorporate the latest e-commerce technology software tools

  - Internet Law
  - Merchandising
  - Marketing
  - Information Architecture
  - Internet Design Principles
  - Metrics

### Partners

Access for Women
Annuncio Live
Creative Good
Fashion Apparel, Inc.
Fashion Planet
IBM Corporation
ISEE3D
Knowledge Strategies
KPMG
Macys.com
Metacreations
Synapix Corporation
Veon Corporation
International Digital Centre, Inc.

# Iḷisaġvik College

## Technology Connection: Computer Training for Residents of Arctic Alaska

Iḷisaġvik College, serving Iñupiat Eskimo and other communities on the North Slope, is developing an associate in applied science program in information technology (IT). The program will combine distance education, Internet instruction, and campus-based instruction that can best accommodate students living in very remote rural areas of arctic Alaska. By design, the curriculum will incorporate the necessary content for students to achieve various information technology industry certifications as well as the associate degree. An Information Technology Tutoring Center will help underprepared students build basic computer literacy and serve as a key area for recruitment into the program.

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Enrollment: 212

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### Program Highlights

- Arctic Alaska, serving eight isolated communities spanning 89,000 square miles with 7,500 people
- Iñupiat Eskimo student population
- Summer computer camp for high school students that enrolls students from rural Alaskan villages in two one-week, one-credit courses
- Information Technology Tutoring Center that will build basic computer literacy skills and help recruit students into the program
- Student intern help desk, which serves the college and provides students with professional work experiences
- Modification of an existing one-year program to create a regionally tailored associate in applied science degree in IT
- Creation of a *learning web* for remote students that integrates various distance delivery methods including a mobile computer lab, audio/video conferencing, summer institute, and online/distributed courses
- Apprenticeships driven by student learning needs lasting from six months to three years
  - Microcomputer Support
  - Customer Service
  - Network Design
  - Network Administration
  - Network Support

### Partners

Arctic Slope Regional Corporation & Village Corporations
Diné College
Maui Community College
North Slope Borough
North Slope Borough School District
Nunavut College
Santa Fe Community College, New Mexico
University of Alaska Fairbanks

# Kentucky Community and Technical College System

## Connecting Kentucky: A Systemic Approach to Empowering People via IT

The Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), consisting of 13 community colleges and 15 technical colleges, aims to make community and technical colleges more responsive to the state's workforce development needs and to serve as a key component for economic development. The *Working Connections* program will provide much-needed skilled information technology (IT) specialists. The program is training faculty in state-of-the-art trends in IT and expanding current distance learning programs. It also is developing a statewide IT curriculum with multiple entry and exit points with an emphasis on industry certification requirements. Connecting Kentucky will target the underserved and underemployed populations of the state's inner cities and Appalachian region. Student scholarships and training workshops for faculty are key program components.

### Program Highlights

- Statewide initiative involving 28 institutions
- Statewide IT curriculum
- Service to welfare recipients, disadvantaged high school and college students, and others in Appalachia
- Expansion of Network and Information Systems Technology program with certificates in wide area networking (WAN), database administration, and e-commerce
- Computer laboratories established in public housing sites
- Articulation agreements with secondary schools
- Scholarships for entry-level students for tuition, books, and equipment
- Train-the-trainer summer workshops for faculty
  - Local Area Networking
  - Wide Area Networking
  - Database Administration
  - E-Commerce
  - Computer Programming

### Partners

BellSouth
Cabinet for Economic Development
Cisco Systems
Hazard Community College
Jefferson Community College
Kentucky Industrial Development Corporation
Kentucky Technology Services
Kentucky Virtual University
Laurel Technical College
Maysville Community College
Metropolitan College
Northern Kentucky Technical College
Paducah Community College
Pomeroy Computer Resources
Sykes Enterprises
United Parcel Service

### CONTACT INFO


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# St. Petersburg Junior College

## E-Commerce Technology

*Working Connections* will develop a new associate of science degree in Web and e-commerce technology along with related certificate programs. These new programs will provide individuals and employers in St. Petersburg an avenue for updating existing skills, acquiring new emerging technical skills, and obtaining both an industry standard certification and educational degrees. In addition, an Information Technology (IT) Readiness Academy for underserved populations will be developed to help prepare students to enter any of the new program offerings that lead to an IT-related certificate or degree. The IT Readiness Academy, which will include basic education, computer literacy, and job readiness skills, will be located in various neighborhood centers in disadvantaged communities.

### Program Highlights

- Focus on women and low-income populations
- Associate in science degree in Web and e-commerce technology
- Five certificate feeder options: Web design, Web server administration, Web applications development, Web enterprise development, and Web and IT project management
- Business partner contributions: internships, mentors, student projects and computers for home use
- Creation of an online publication documenting each phase of the *Working Connections* program
- IT Readiness program for underserved populations: a self-paced, computer-based program to provide basic skills remediation, job skills, and computer literacy training
- Faculty return-to-industry programs
- Web component for all program courses
  - Data Configuration
  - Computer Operation
  - Web and E-Commerce Server Administration
  - Web and E-Commerce Program Development
  - Web and E-Commerce Site Design

### Partners

Citizens Alliance for Progress, Inc.
DataGlyphics
Hydrogen Media, Inc.
Lockheed Martin IMS Corporation
Resource Center for Women
Tech Data Corporation

**CONTACT INFO**

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# San Diego City College

## Working Connections San Diego

To prepare skilled workers for area information technology (IT) jobs, San Diego City College is strengthening its IT degree and certificate programs through continuing education. IT curriculum development, implementation, and approval is on a fast track to keep up with rapid change in the technology sector. The *Working Connections* IT training for disadvantaged people integrates technology training with soft skills, adult basic education, and English as a second language. The program leverages college resources with federal workforce development programs. Articulation agreements with local educational institutions provide clear educational paths from high school to community college.

**CONTACT INFO**


San Diego City College
1313 Twelfth Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101
President: Bobby F. Wilson
*www.city.sdccd.cc.ca.us*
Enrollment: 13,998

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### Program Highlights

- IT training to people in San Diego's low-income, disadvantaged downtown community
- Student support through intensive counseling, tutoring, and grants for books and certification testing fees
- Articulation agreement with High Tech High, a charter school where graduates can earn an associate degree in one year and transfer to a university
- Semester-long business internships and job shadowing opportunities for faculty, and competitive internships for students
- Articulation of fast-track continuing education programs into credit IT programs
- Two types of certificates: one for job readiness focusing on current job training needs, and a second for career preparation and training to move up the career ladder
- Mini-conferences in which faculty and teachers from multiple educational institutions create articulation agreements

- Computer Programming
- Internet Fluency
- E-Business and Web Design
- A+ Certification
- MCSE Certification
- MOUS Certification

### Partners

Datel Systems, Inc.
High Tech High
Qualcomm, Inc.
San Diego County Office of Education
San Diego Future Foundations
San Diego Housing Commission
San Diego Regional Technology Alliance
San Diego Workforce Partnership, Inc.

# Southwest Virginia Community College

## IT Super Highway Training Academy

The IT Super Highway Training Academy at Southwest Virginia Community College will help people in its rural area find rapid entry into the workforce through information technology (IT) certification programs in at least seven career tracks. The college is developing three certification programs in distance education delivery modes, with alternative telecommuting and virtual workplace options. College-supported e-commerce Web sites will market rural businesses. Other key parts of the *Working Connections* program include a model student success program and summer internships for faculty. Designation as a Microsoft Authorized Academic Training Program will cement the college's certification training for Microsoft certified professionals and Microsoft certified systems engineers.

**CONTACT INFO**


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*www.sw.cc.va.us*
Enrollment: 4,055

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### Program Highlights

- Service to dislocated coal miners in a region that has lost more than 10,000 mining-related jobs in last decade
- IT Express Lane, offering student cohort courses in telecommuting, virtual workplace skills, gatekeeper success, beginning IT skills, and a wide range of integrated support services
- Seven career tracks, three with a distance learning option
- Three new certificate programs: e-commerce professional, network and Internet administration, software development
- Virtual internships to students preparing for telecommuting or Web-based certification programs
- Summer faculty internships and training in certification programs
- IT job locator staff position at college to visit IT firms, develop a database of firms and positions, help students prepare individual training plans and portfolios, and match graduates with employers

- Information Systems
- Network Administration
- E-Commerce
- Technology Certifications

### Partners

Buchanan County
Crutchfield Corporation
Dickenson County
Kaleidoscope Information Services
NetAccess
Marshall Miller & Associates
Russell County
Tazewell County
TurnerVision
Verizon
Virginia Employment Commission

# Southwestern Oregon Community College

## The Oregon Coast Jobs-In-Technology Partnership

The Jobs-in-Technology Partnership will prepare disadvantaged and underemployed individuals for careers in information technology (IT). Students receive training through a continuum of courses and modules that lead to certificates and associate degrees. Southwestern Oregon Community College delivers courses through high schools, college labs, one-stop centers, and the Web. The certificates will follow a career ladder approach to an associate degree in IT with multiple entry points. Business partners work closely with the college on curriculum input and internships. One-stop partners will provide a seamless service delivery. The Jobs-In-Technology Partnerships will develop a curriculum that will be used in existing and new programs on campus, at outreach sites, and at a new e-commerce center that will train students in business services over the Internet. A tech help line will offer assistance with technical and course questions.

### Program Highlights

- Service to disadvantaged timber communities
- Development of associate of applied science degrees in IT, building on a career ladder of certificates with multiple entry points
- IT degrees with a focus on software specialist, network administration and design, technical support, e-commerce, and Web site production and design
- E-commerce training center to prepare the workforce for doing business over the Internet
- Course delivery through high schools, college labs, one-stop centers, and the Web
- Student/faculty telephone and Internet help line to facilitate a learning community
- Establish the college as an authorized training and testing center for MOUS, MCP, MCSE, CISCO, Network +, and A+
- Statewide model for using certificates as a career ladder into an associate in applied science degree
- Partnership with the Newmark One-Stop Center (18 agencies) to deliver support services to disadvantaged students.

- Software Specialist
- Network Administration and Design
- Technical Support
- E-Commerce
- Website Production/Design
- Industry Certifications

### Partners

800 Support/Cyber Rep
CBSI, Inc.
Cisco Systems, Inc.
Intel, Inc.
Newmark One-Stop Partnership
Oregon Advanced Technology Consortium
Oregon Department of Adult and Family Services
Oregon Department of Employment
Oregon University System
StRUT Program
South Coast Business Employment Corporation
South Coast Workforce Committee
Unicom, Inc

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# Working Connections Class of 2000

## Aims Community College

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# Working Connections Class of 2001

## Camden County College

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## Working Connections Mentor Colleges

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## Class of 2000

Aims Community College, Greeley, CO
Borough of Manhattan Community College, New York, NY
Charles County Community College, La Plata, MD
Iowa Lakes Community College, Estherville, IA
Midlands Technical College, Columbia, SC
Peralta Community College District, Oakland, CA
- College of Alameda, Alameda, CA
- Laney College, Oakland, CA
- Merritt College, Oakland, CA
- Vista College, Berkeley, CA

Northern New Mexico Consortium, NM
- Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe, NM (lead college)
- Northern New Mexico Community College, Española, NM
- University of New Mexico at Los Alamos, Los Alamos, NM

Walters State Community College, Morristown, TN

## Class of 2001

Camden County Community College, Blackwood, NJ
Cerritos College, Norwalk, CA
Frederick Community College, Frederick, MD
Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, NE
New Hampshire Community Technical College System, Concord, NH
- New Hampshire Community Technical College at Berlin/Laconia
- New Hampshire Community Technical College at Concord
- New Hampshire Community Technical College at Manchester/Stratham
- New Hampshire Community Technical College at Nashua/Claremont

South Texas Community College, McAllen, TX
Wallace Community College, Selma, AL

## Mentor Colleges

Bellevue Community College, Bellevue, WA
DeAnza College, Cupertino, CA
Richland College, Dallas, TX
Springfield Technical Community College, Springfield, MA
Valencia Community College, Orlando, FL

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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